

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 2, 7, 8, and 10 are cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 6, 9, and 11 were previously cancelled. Claims 1, 3-5, and 12 are pending. Claim 1 and is amended. Claim 1 is independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Reasons for Entry of Amendments

At the outset, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered into the Official File in view of the fact that the amendments to the claims automatically place the application in condition for allowance.

In the alternative, if the Examiner does not agree that this application is in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered for the purpose of appeal. This Amendment reduces the issues on appeal by placing the claims in compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, and by canceling claims 2, 7, 8, and 10 and incorporating the limitations of allowable claim 7 into independent claim 1. This Amendment was not presented at an earlier date in view of the fact that Applicants did not fully appreciate the Examiner's position until the Final Office Action was reviewed.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claim 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In response, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 7.

Claim 7 is now cancelled. Accordingly, claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10, and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In order to overcome this rejection, Applicants have amended claim 1 to cancel the subject matter that the Examiner alleges is not mentioned in the specification. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-6 and 8-10 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowen (U.S. 2,127,903) in view of Datta et al (U.S. 2003/0144730). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Complete discussions of the Examiner's rejections are set forth in the Office Action, and are not being repeated here.

Independent Claim 1

As noted above, and while not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 7. Therefore, independent claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

The Examiner will note that dependent claims 2, 7, 8, and 10 have been cancelled by this amendment.

Dependent claims 3, 4, 5, and 12 are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel features set forth therein.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are respectfully requested.

All pending claims are in condition for allowance.

*Application No. 10/821,925
Amendment dated March 23, 2006
Reply to Office Action of December 27, 2005*

*Docket No.: 4866-0101PUS1
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CONCLUSION

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject claims, but merely to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

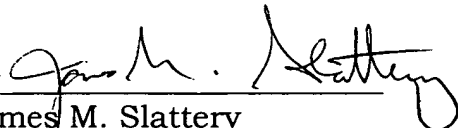
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In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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